

October 5, 2017

Mr. Phil Strong  
President  
Greater Edmonton Taxi Services Group  
10135 – 31 Avenue NW  
Edmonton, AB T6N 1C2

Dear Mr. Phil Strong,

The Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities (Council) was created in 1988 to provide advice and recommendations to the Government of Alberta on matters relating to the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities in the life of the province. Council's advice is grounded in their lived experience as people with disabilities and in what we hear from the disability community which includes people with disabilities, their families, advocacy groups and service providers.

This letter is being written to you to draw your attention to the significant issue of accessible transportation for the disability community. It is a situation that requires follow up to ensure that Albertans with disabilities are served in a reliable and respectful manner.

I would like to provide some context and background to the situation that recently occurred when the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Secretariat booked two accessible taxis in advance in order to attend a meeting with the Minister of Community and Social Services at the Alberta Legislature in the early evening of September 20, 2017. A pre-arranged pick up time of 5:10 PM had been scheduled through Yellow Taxi for at the Matrix Hotel in order to get two, mobility disabled Council members to their 5:30 PM at the Alberta Legislature. The accessible taxis did not arrive as booked and this resulted in the Council members and their personal assistants waiting for over an hour and in these two Council members missing a significant portion of the meeting with the Minister. This situation highlighted a significant transportation barrier, not just for Council members but for all people with disabilities.

In the spirit of open communication and shared problem solving I am requesting that a senior representative from the Edmonton Taxi Service Group meet with a representative of the Premiers Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and me. It is my hope that we can use this meeting to explore possible solutions to the transportation challenges facing Albertans with disabilities and also help the Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities understand the challenges facing Edmonton's taxi professionals in providing reliable, accessible taxi services as they shape their advice on disability issues to the provincial government.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Stinson', written over a horizontal line.

John Stinson  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Disabilities, Inclusion and Accessibility  
Department of Community and Social Services  
Government of Alberta

cc. Honourable Irfan Sabir  
Minister of Community and Social Services

Mayor Don Iveson  
City of Edmonton

Ms. Shelley Thompson  
Accessibility Advisory Committee  
City of Edmonton

Ms. Sheila Serup  
Chair  
Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities